



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, May 20, 2014

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**Cal OES Coordinates Urban Search and Rescue Task Forces
Largest Exercise for Deployment of Resources this Year**

Los Angeles – On Tuesday, May 20, 2014, the California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) participated in the Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) multi-team mobilization exercise throughout the Los Angeles area.

The Mobilization Exercise (MOBEX) is a State, Federal and local real time deployment exercise designed to test the readiness and effectiveness of emergency response system within our state. Conducted annually, it demonstrates just how prepared the teams are ready for any disaster. This year’s exercise tested search and rescue scenarios at a plane crash, an earthquake and a water-based response.

“California trains the best first responders in the world and we need as many highly skilled, multi-hazard response personnel as we can get,” said Cal OES Director Mark Ghilarducci. “We know that every day could be the day that they are called upon to respond to the next major disaster.”

This exercise is one of the largest-scale examples of functional, hands-on training experience for our first responders. The training that these professionals go through is intense and requires a wide array of disciplines to be in play at any moment during their missions. Task force members must complete hundreds of hours of training, including specialties like K-9 search techniques, collapsed structure searches and water search and rescues.

Currently, there are 28 US&R teams across the nation and 8 of them are part of the Cal OES Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid. These teams have responded to the worlds worst disasters like Hurricane Katrina, the terrorist attacks of 9/11, the Oklahoma City Bombing, the devastating Northridge Earthquake in Southern California and more recently Hurricane Sandy that devastated the East Coast. The teams based in California were also a significant part of the response effort to the massive earthquake in Northern Japan in 2011.

To kick off this large-scale exercise, a press conference was held at the Los Angeles Fire Department US&R Building in Sherman Oaks. Speakers included Cal OES Director Mark Ghilarducci, Los Angeles City Mayor Eric Garcetti, Los Angeles Fire Chief James Featherstone, Los Angeles County Fire Chief Daryl Osby and Dr. Lucy Jones, U.S. Geological Survey in Pasadena.

For more information about Urban Search and Rescue click [here](#).

Read the Cal OES Newsroom Blog [story](#) about this exercise.

[See](#) the images from the annual west coast exercise.